



MAYOR AND COUNCIL AGENDA

NO. 6

DEPT.: Community Planning and Development Services
STAFF CONTACT: Jim Wasilak

DATE PREPARED: 4/27/05
FOR MEETING OF: May 9, 2005

SUBJECT: Briefing on the Design and Status of the Rockville District Court building

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends that the Mayor and Council provide comments to the Maryland Department of General Services

DISCUSSION: The Maryland Department of General Services, along with the architectural firm DMJM, has been engaged in the design process for the new District Courthouse, to be constructed on the site of the present Rockville Regional Library at 99 Maryland Avenue. A new District Court building has been deemed necessary due to the increasing amount of civil, traffic and some felony citations being issued in Montgomery County.

The building will contain 160,000 square feet and include 10 courtrooms, the same amount as the current facility, in six stories. The building is contemporary in design, and includes a prominent pedestrian plaza at the corner of Maryland Avenue and East Jefferson Street. On-site parking will be limited to court personnel. Secure access to the building for prisoner transfer will be located off Vinson Street. The design of the courthouse has been presented to the State of Maryland's Architectural Review Board on three occasions throughout the design development process.

The Department of General Services presented the design to members of the community at a public meeting on April 26, 2005. Concerns included the scale and size of the building, the secure prisoner transfer function, the amount of parking, the lack of separation between the building and the adjacent historic district, and access to the site from surrounding streets. There are also concerns about pedestrian safety, especially MD 28 (East Jefferson Street).

Next Steps: The Department of General Services will present the design to the state's Architectural Review Board for final review and comment later in May. Ultimately, the Secretary of General Services will approve the final design. Construction is scheduled to begin in August 2006.

PREPARED BY:

R. James Wasilak

Jim Wasilak, AICP, Chief of Long Range Planning

DATE: 5.3.05

APPROVED BY:

Arthur D. Chambers

Arthur D. Chambers, AICP, Director

DATE: 5.3.05

APPROVED BY:

Scott Ullery

Scott Ullery, City Manager

DATE: 5/5/05